

MUSIDORUS:

A

P O E M

Sacred to the MEMORY of

Mr. JAMES THOMSON.

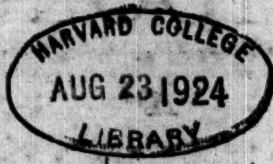
——— *Dignum laude Virum*
Musa vetat mori.

H O R.

L O N D O N:

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Mr. James Thomson

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A

P O E M.

FROM lighter Strains to sing the tragic Theme,
Awake my Muse! while Nature lends her
Aid,

Inspires my Bosom, animates the Lay,
And calls forth Fancy from her airy Seat,
To wing the sacred Flight. Shall he remain
Unsung, whose own immortal Lays could pile
Triumphal Arches, and for Merit wreath
Eternal Laurels? Shall the gen'rous Bard
Shake off the Bonds of Sense, and upwards mount
Beyond this little Scene, and not receive
The weeping Tribute of a grateful Muse?

O could the Muse catch the poetic Flame;
Which glows celestial in the sacred Page,

Where

Where NEWTON's * Glories to th'astonish'd eye
Unbounded shine ! then might the hope to raise
A Monument immortal to his Name.

But where begin to sing the mighty Theme !
How utter half his Praise ? Ye Sons of Verse,
Who from this Fountain drew poetic Life,
Sing loud his Merit ! ye who climb the Paths
Which guide to Glory, and with soaring Wing
Ascend the Musè's Hill, can ye remain
Silent, while yet the dear Remembrance swells
Your grateful Bosoms ? Say, what noble Grace,
What Virtue was not his ? Supremely blest'd
With lavish Nature's Gifts, how did he range
Thro' all her Wilds, and to the wond'ring Mind
Display the rolling Year ? The verdant SPRING,
Clad in her flow'ry Pride, profuse of Charms,
Smiles from the lucid South ; while Nature all
Starts up to Life, and owns her genial Power,
Blooms in her rich Array, and shoots profuse
Her vegetable Store : The fragrant Plain,
Deck'd in her Beauties, opens all her Sweets,
And, big with Blessings, cheers the Heart of Man,

The

* See his Poem sacred to the Memory of Sir Isaac
Newton.

The blooming Spring averts her Virgin Face,
 When SUMMER comes ; with sultry Pace he comes,
 And beams in Glory o'er the fervid Globe,
 His plastic Rays all ripening Nature feels,
 And glows in youthful Pride ; diffusive Showers
 Refresh the arid Glebe, or from the Cloud
 Deep-black'ning the impetuous Torrent pours ;
 Or dreadful burst the Magazines of Hail :
 Athwart the Sky the forked Light'nings flash
 In horrid Pomp, and the hoarse Thunder roars,
 Tremend'ous roars, and awes the frightened World.

But, lo the changing Scene ! AUTUMN appears,
 Array'd in yellow Pomp ; the Orchard bends
 With fragrant Fruitage, blushing 'midst the Leaves
 And grateful to the Taste ; the Harvest waves
 O'er all the fertile Field ; the Farmer's Heart
 Exulting leaps, as o'er the nodding Plain
 He throws his joyous Eyes, while *Industry*
 Now grasps the Sickle, and innur'd to Toil
 With busy Hand concludes the rustling Scene.

But scarce has Autumn pour'd her fruitful Boon
 Luxuriant forth, and swell'd the Farmer's Store,
 Till from the low'ring East, in stormy Rage,
 The WINTER roars, and all his gloomy Train

Sweep

Sweep o'er the trembling Year. The hoary Frost
Rears his congealing Head, while oft the Snow
Descends in fleecy Pomp. The changing Scenes
Which deck the Seasons; the revolving Year,
Both when she blooms, and when in wintry Time
She darts her Horrors o'er the shivering World,
Dress'd in her Glories stands disclos'd by him.

His Genius boundless rang'd thro' all the Tracts
Of wid'ning Nature; to his piercing Eye
The Sun effulgent open'd all his Stores
Of Light immense, which, with the borrow'd Rays
Night's glimmering Queen transmits, for ever shine
With heavenly Splendor in his solemn Song.

FREEDOM divine, which in the Patriot's Soul
Glows fervid †, he with gen'rous Vigour breath'd,
And sung the mighty Theme. Immortal Rome,
Where Freedom once tremend'ous held her Reign,
And shook her Terrors o'er the yielding World,
Where bleeding Heroes stemm'd the rushing Tide
Of dreadful Ruin, and with Glory lay
Stretch'd on the Plains of Conquest, while the State
O'er trembling Nations spread her awful Wings
Imperial, she, in his pathetic Song,

Shines

† See his Poem on Liberty.

Shines still rever'd, and thro' the Bosom darts
 The Patriot Ray, while oft with manly Rage,
 The kindling Breast breathes forth the gen'rous Fire,

Nor stops his Muse, but thro' contending *Greece*
 Pursues her ample Range, and shews the State
 In all her Terrors drest, when Freedom pour'd
 Her martial Sons profusely o'er the Field,
 To check th'exulting East, when dreadful swept
 The *Persian* Lord, while in his num'rous Train
 Collected Nations roll'd. How Freedom rous'd
 These Sons of Greatness, to sustain the Shocks
 Of gathering Armies, he in martial Strains
 Presented, vivid to th'astonish'd eye.

BRITANNIA's Glory, in his sacred Page,
 Breaks forth illustrious; all the Sons of Fame
 Whose dauntless Souls, superior to the Shocks
 Of wayward Fortune, urg'd their gen'rous Course,
 Embalm'd for ever, dazzle in his Song.
 He traced the Risings of the warlike State,
 How oft inflam'd the madding Nation jarr'd,
 In dire Combustion and intestine Rage,
 O'erwhelm'd the harrafs'd Land, while Freedom wing'd
 Her sacred Flight, and left the drooping Isle

To

To wail her sad Remove, till *William* rose,
To waft her backwards from the *Belgick* Shore.

Nor stoop'd his Muse, beneath the mighty Weight
Of TALBOT'S • Virtues; the enchanting Flow
Of Eloquence divine, which from his Lips
In sweet Profusion stream'd, strait charm'd the Soul,
And pour'd Persuasion round th'astonish'd Throng.
These all are his----and more. The glowing Heart
Which grasps the human Kind, the tender Throb
Which weeps the Woes of Man, the lib'ral Hand
Which strews profuse its glad'ning Bounties round,
Nor can his gen'rous Deeds by ruthless Time
Be e'er effac'd, since dress'd in THOMSON'S Lays
They charm immortal: In his Portrait fair
The finish'd Statesmen shines, the Patriot glows,
And every Virtue opens to the View.

But say! ye Virgins, from whose tender Breasts
He drew the heaving Sigh, while graceful down
Your Cheeks warm blushing fell the starting Tears,
In pearly Sorrow, as with gen'rous Rage,
His SOPHONISBA † drinks th'empoison'd Cup,

And

• See his Poem consecrated to the Memory of Lord
Talbot.

† A Tragedy of that Title by Mr. Thomson.

And dies undaunted in the noble Cause
 Of bleeding *Carthage*. All ye lovely Train,
 Do ye not mourn him, and your smarting Breasts,
 Feel agonizing Throws! your Bard no more
 Can charm your Ears, nor in your Bosoms pour
 His soft Instructions; while with nameless Art
 He led you captive thro' the Maze of Love,
 And with enchanting Numbers swell'd your Souls.
 Oft have your Breasts with sweet Emotions heav'd,
 As oft you turn'd his Nature-painting Page,
 And drank the Draughts of Love; your ev'ry Nerve
 With Trepidation seiz'd, confess'd the Flame,
 High-kindling in your Souls, as thro' your Veins
 The shivering Transport ran; nor did his Muse
 E'er paint a guilty Scene, but nobly pure,
 Presented Virtue in her lovely Robes
 Of Innocence and Peace: By him she charm'd,
 And reign'd triumphant o'er the yielding Heart.

But as, with him, the tragic Muse has wing'd
 Her airy Flight, and left the drooping Isle,
 Long to bemoan her Thomson, now no more
 The Genius of the Stage; ye Gay and Fair,
 When his last Scenes * shall open to your View

B

in

* *CORIOLANUS*, a Tragedy written by Mr. Thomson, which is expected to be acted this Season.

In perfect Lustre great ; when *Rome* shall move
 The horrid Hate, which hastes relentless on,
 To strike the Blow of Fate, and dreadful pour
 Collected Vengeance on the *Roman* Name.

O then ye Fair ! with ever grateful Hearts
 Assert his Cause, as oft in mingling Crowds
 Ye nightly visit, where with tragic Rage
 Resounds the vaulted Dome, while in your Eyes
 Oft starts the Tear, and down your rosy Cheeks
 Steals trickling, then assert the generous Cause,
 And with your Praises crown his parting Scenes.

Never did Envy stain his noble Breast ;
 Far from his Bosom fled th' infernal Fiend,
 Nor durst approach a Soul so great as his.
 Sereenest Virtue, on his smiling Brow,
 Sat in her Charms, and with collected Grace,
 Engag'd th' admiring Throng : He never knew
 The idle Pomp of Life, nor meanly grasp'd
 At pageant Greatness ; nor, with eager Eye,
 Pursu'd the Glare of Wealth ; his was a Task
 Of nobler kind, while on his swelling Soul
 Rush'd *Contemplation*, and ethereal flew
 Throughout the Spheres, and on his wond'ring Eyes
 Pour'd all her Visions forth : But say, ye Few !
 Who knew the Movements of his noble Mind,
 And felt the glad'ning Beams of Friendship dart

From

From Soul to Soul, ye knew his Bosom breath'd
 Benevolence to Man, he grasp'd his kind
 In all the Ties of Love : but O while round
 The social Bowl, ye quaff'd the mental Feast
 With fond Endearment, and his Flow of Wit,
 With Bliss ecstatic, fill'd your ravish'd Minds ;
 While he, with Look benign, with winning Grace
 And Tongue instructive, open'd all his Stores of
 Treasur'd Knowledge, and with rapid Flight,
 Time wing'd her Way ---- Can ye recount these
 Scenes

Of boundless Pleasure ? ---- No---- Remembrance
 checks

The fond Relation, and o'er all your Souls
 Extends a pensive Gloom. Ah whither fled
 These Hours of Bliss ! If in this Vale of Tears,
 (Where mingling Horror gathers all her Storms
 To blast the Scenes of Joy) aught can be called
 Ecstatic Bliss. Such, visionary Life,
 Are all thy shifting Scenes ; now they unfold
 Their varied Charms, and, like the vernal Rose,
 Diffuse their balmy Sweets, till strait succeeds
 The gelid Air, to nip their blossom'd Growth.
 What art thou, Life ! at best an airy Shew,
 And like a Vapour which by Night condens'd
 O'erclouds the Sky, till strait the solar Ray
 Pierces its tenuous Sides, then sinks its Form

To

To infant Atoms ; such the Base of Life,
 So fly the Phantoms of our fond Pursuit !
 Scarce on our conscious Head has Nature pour'd
 Existence, and uprear'd the brittle Frame
 With her conducting Hand, till round she sows
 The Seeds of Death ; Diseases unobserved
 For ever mine the Citadel of Life,
 Till one dread Blast dissolves it into Dust.

Where fled ye, Visions of enchanting Joy,
 With all your giddy Train ? Where now the Hope
 Which warm'd the Virgin's Breast, as in her Pride
 Of rosy Beauty oft she turn'd the Round
 Of Pastimes gay, and drunk th'enchancing Cup
 Of madd'ning Pleasure ! while with conscious Blush
 She beam'd her Beauties round, and felt the Sweets
 Of Love and Conquest kindling in her Soul.

Scarce has she wav'd in all her gaudy Dress,
 Or lavish'd half her Charms, or view'd the Scene
 Of youthful Frolic ; scarce has Nature flush'd
 Her blooming Cheek, or in her Bosom pour'd
 The Throbs of Love, or on her shining Hair
 Bestowed the Raven-hue, or built her Limbs
 With fine Proportion ; till behold the Breath
 Of dread Affliction blasts her rosy Youth ;
 Then drops the Veil o'er every ripening Charm ;

Now

Now fly her Visions, with their airy Train
 Of future Bliss, with which her swelling Breast
 Triumphant heav'd, now baffled Beauty weeps,
 And o'er her livid Face even Virtue drops
 The elegiac Tear. So wither'd fall
 The Sons of Pleasure, who in flow'ry Youth
 Look'd forward to enjoy a Length of Days,
 Gay o'er the Stage of Time, they flutt'ring move,
 Secure of Life, and plan the empty Dream
 Of mimic Greatness; oft exults the Heart
 O'er all the fancy'd Scene, while heedless they
 Rush on the Snares of Woe, and instant Fate
 Snatches her tender Prey. Now rising Hope,
 With all her Phantoms of expected Joy,
 Shrinks into Air. Thus fleet the Days of Man,
 While all the Din and glitt'ring Pomp of Life
 Remain for ever-hush'd in silent Sleep.
 Nor want we here the elegiac Song,
 To strew fresh Roses round the sacred Tomb,
 Where Virtue weeps; here let the pensive Mind
 Turn to the glowing Page, where SEASONS roll
 Around the varied Year; there view array'd
 In Beauty's Grace, the ever blooming *Spring*,
 Benevolent and mild; or all the Pomp
 Which sultry *Summer* shews; or all the Stores
 Which yellow *Autumn* pours; or *Winter* view,
 With Storms and Torrents rushing o'er the Year.

The se

These all are his. And while the *Spring* remains
 To paint the Vale, or rustling *Harvest* nods,
 Or *Winter* glooms, or *Summer* glads the Earth,
 These, these shall rear his monumental Stone
 Beyond the Attacks of Time. O could the Muse
 O'erleap the Bounds of Sense, and wing her Flight
 To yon effulgent Orbs, where dwell the Bless'd,
 Array'd in lucid Robes, there might she view
 The Muses Sons with chearful Looks advance,
 To hail the Partner of their deathless Joy.

See SPENCER * deigns to point his mazy Way
 Thro' Mansions ever new ; and MILTON's self,
 Obsequious bending from his laurel'd Throne,
 Now greets his noblest Son, and to the Choir
 Of circling Angels, yields the heavenly Guest ;
 Who lead him wond'ring thro' the radiant Spheres,
 Lost in the Maze of Thought, high rais'd, to him
 Whose Hand creative form'd the spacious Vast
 Of thousand Worlds, who bid our solar Year
 Revolve, and Seasons steer their varied Course :
 And moves, directs, and agitates the Whole.

* *Mr. Thomson, being the best descriptive Poet in our Age, has frequently own'd, that in this Respect he form'd his Taste upon Spencer.*

